

# The RANGER

2<sup>nd</sup>



THE  
CATCH OF  
THE SEASON

# The Fourth Form at GRIMSLADE!



WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU'D DRAWN A WINNING TICKET IN THE IRISH SWEEP? WHAT DOES OLD SYKES, THE GRIMSLADE PORTER, DO? DON'T READ THIS MOLLUKING YARN UNLESS YOU LIKE LAUGHING, FOR IT'S ONE BIG SCREAM FROM BEGINNING TO END!

By Famous FRANK RICHARDS.

## Astonishing!

"SIX-five-four-three-two-one-six!" Jim Dainty glanced around as he heard that. He did! Dick Dawson and Fritz Spitta, who were coming in at the gates of Grimslade with Jim.

What old Sykes, the porter, meant by it was rather a mystery.

That grizzled old gentleman was sitting on the little wooden bench in the old stone porch of his lodge. To the surprise of the juniors, there was an expensive smile on the rugged, wrinkled face of old Sykes. Soldiers were old Sykes used to smile. Enemies were never in his line. But now he was smiling—a smile that was so expansive that it extended almost from one ear to the other. If Sykes had not come into a fortune, his looks belied him. Certainly, he looked as if he had.

"Six-five-four-three-two-one-six!" repeated Sykes, blinking at a slip of paper in his heavy hand. "That's a cork—a real! Corks!"

"Main goodness!" remarked Fritz Spitta, staring at Sykes with his supercilious side open. "Is that main real?"

"What's the game, Sykes?" asked Jim Dainty.

Old Sykes glanced up and saw the juniors. Old Sykes was not always so civil and respectful as he might have been. He was a rugged old gentleman, and his manners were rugged. Dr. Samuel Sparshott, the Head of Grimslade, had called him a "rough diamond." And there was no doubt, at least, about the adjective. At the present moment, Sykes' manners, never polished, seemed to have deteriorated. He gave Jim Dainty a stare, and waved his heavy hand impatiently.

"Cork it, young Dainty!" he grunted. "Don't worry a man! 'Cork it!'"

"Why, you corked old grampus!" exclaimed Jim indignantly.

"When I say 'cork it,' I mean 'cork it,'" said old Sykes, and he dropped his eyes to his slip of paper again. "Six-five-four-three-two-one-six!"

Thousands of pounds! Corks!"

He chuckled.

The three juniors regarded him with wonder.

Ginger Rawlinson, of Redmayne House, came down to the lodge.

"Sykes, old bean, Sarsney wants you!" he called out.

The Grimslade porter snorted.

"Tell him to wait!" he snapped.

"What-a-what?" stammered Ginger, and Jim Dainty & Co. stared harder. If old Sykes was ever still to anybody it was to Sarsney Sparshott, the Head of Grimslade. Now he seemed to have no ability left even for Sarsney!

"I ain't no time now for Sars Sparshott!" said old Sykes. "Tell him so, and 'cork it, you red-headed stretch, you!"

"My giddy gobshite!" gasped Ginger.

"Do you want to be asked, you old man?"

Sykes chuckled again.

"Heard!" he repeated emphatically. "Think I've staying 'ere, keeping this 'ere make with thousands and thousands of pounds!"

"Mad as a hatter!" said Dick Dawson, in sheer wonder.

"Look at that, you young fellow!" said Sykes, holding up his slip of paper.

"What's the number on that there? Six-five-four-three-two-one-six, eh? Well, that's a winning number! Ever 'ard of the Irish Sweep?"

"The Irish sweep?" repeated Jim Dainty. "If you mean Bill Murphy, of Blacketts."

"A w, with some!" said Sykes. "I'm telling about the Irish Sweepstakes; and I tell you that's a winning number. I put in two bob, I did, and I'm drawing out thirty thousand pounds!"

"Main goodness!" exclaimed Fritz Spitta. "Main good Sykes, you have got a prize in it Irish Sweepstakes! You win thirty thousand pounds! Oh, grumble! My good friend, you mean Sykes. I have always liked you."

"Cork it!" said Sykes. "Cheery young lighters, the lot of you! Young Rawlinson, you can go and tell Sam Sparshott that if he wants to see a man, he can come to a man—a man ain't taking the trouble to walk across to see him. And clear off, the lot of

you, if you don't want a sheet all round!"

"A—a—a sheet all round!" gasped Jim Dainty.

"Yes—and run hard!" said Sykes darkly.

Evidently that glorious stroke of fortune had got into old Sykes' head a little. Winning thirty thousand pounds at one fell swoop was the sort of thing to turn almost any man's head. Old Sykes was dreaming golden dreams.

He had quite a good job as porter at Grimslade School; but that job he now regarded with utter contempt. Touching his hat to Grimsladers was a thing of the past. A man who was about to touch thirty thousand pounds was not going to touch his hat! Sykes was going above himself—miles above himself—thanks to his wonderful luck.

But Jim Dainty & Co. did not care twopenny for his thirty thousand pounds—even if he got it. And he had not got it yet! Even with thirty thousand pounds in prospect Sykes was still, for the present, the porter at Grimslade, and not allowed to be cheeky. Which fact Jim Dainty & Co. decided, on the spot, to make clear unto him.

"You howling ass!" said Jim.

"You cheeky old fossil! There's going to be about all round—and you're going to get them! 'Cork it!"

"Heads off!" roared Sykes, as Dainty and Dawson and Ginger jumped at him, as if moved by the same spring. "It's—Yancooch!"

Old Sykes came off his bench and bumped on the ground. He roared with wrath. Chest, about chest! Three hefty smacks were administered, and Mr. Sykes gave three fearful howls. Then Ginger Rawlinson landed a smale on Mr. Sykes' hat and crushed it over his ears.

"Roll him over!" called Ginger.

"Drop him up! Give him a lesson in manners!" He's wanted one a long time.

"Cock, rook, hoop!" spluttered Miles Sykes, gurgling wildly. "You young raskin! Deooooo!"

Wild yells and howls came from the

lucky winner in the Irish Sweep as he was rolled, and landed, and bumped over before his lodge. Grimalade fellows were generally very tolerant with old Sykes, who was an institution at the place. But if Miss Sykes thought that she could be lucky because he had won thirty thousand pounds in a lottery, old Sykes was spiteful. And he was finding out his mistake—in quite a painful manner.

"Boys!" It was the deep voice of Dr. Sparshott. The Head came up with long strides. "Royal! How dare you! Release Sykes at once!"

"Oh, my giddy gobshins! Here's Sammy!"

The juniors released Sykes, who sat up, spluttering. Dr. Sparshott eyed Sam sternly.

"Daisy, Kewbottom, what is the meaning of this?" barked Sammy.

"The old man was cheeky, sir!" said Daisy.

"Ooohh!" spluttered Sykes. "Ooohh! I'll clear 'em all round!" He staggered to his feet. "Look 'ere, Sam Sparshott—"

"The school's grinning, Sammy was getting some of it now!"

"Look 'ere, Sam!" roared Sykes. "You keep your boys in order, or I don't want any impudence from them, nor from you, neither. See!"

With that, Sykes marched into his lodge and slammed the door with a resounding slam.

The juniors, grinning, beat a retreat. Sammy grunted and did not seem so threatened. He stood staring at the door that had slammed in his face, with no expression of astonishment on his face, looking as if he was rooted to the earth.

**The Irish Sweep!**

GRIMALADE SCHOOL buzzed with the news.

One of the big prizes in the Irish Sweep had been won at Grimalade—and by Miss Sykes, the school porter!

Sykes seemed to be walking on air! He bestowed a scornful smile on the staring Grimalades. A Second Form bag, rattling down the path, brushed against Sykes. Sykes pulled his ear to the amazement and speechless "wretch" of the girl.

Mr. White and Mr. Rodmeyer, the Housemasters, came along. Instead of knocking his hat, as per usual, Sykes gave them a cool stare and swaggered past them. They looked at him.

"Sykes!" rapped Mr. White.

"Oh, 'old year now!" said Sykes, and stalked on, leaving the two Sabbath-school masters staring after him.

Fellows rather wondered why Dr. Sparshott did not take Sykes by the scruff of the neck and beat him out of Grimalade. But perhaps the Head had compassion for an old and faithful servant whose head had been turned by unexpected fortune. Perhaps, too, he had some doubt about the reality of the good fortune, and suspected that poor Sykes, after going up like the rocket, might come down like the stick.

"The silly old man!" said Jim Dainty.

"Checking out Housemaster! Blasted if I know why Sammy doesn't kick him out! I'll give him Irish Sweep!"

The next morning, after class, Jim Dainty pushed out his bicycle and peddled away to Blackman. As that town he called upon Mr. William Murphy, who carried on the trade of chimney-sweep. There was a grin on Jim's face when he came back to Grimalade.

That afternoon was a half-holiday. After dinner Jim Dainty walked down to the lodge. There was a grump within as he rapped on Sykes' door.

"Get in!" called out Sykes. "If I come out to you, young Dainty, you'll lose it!"

"Oh, all right!" called back Jim.

"If you don't want to hear an offer for your ticket on the telephone—"

That was enough for Sykes. His door flew open, and Sykes flew out. Since he had seen the published list of winning numbers Sykes had been in heavily expectation of receiving telephone calls offering him large prizes for his ticket, or a share in the ticket. He had drawn Second; No. 0242215 was Second, the fortunate. Offers ought to have poured in already. But for some reason they hadn't.

"Billy White's telephone," called out Jim, and Sykes started at a run for White's house.

Mr. White had gone out that afternoon. His study was empty when Sykes reached it. He bounded to the telephone. As he did so the study door was slammed and locked on the outside; and Dick Dawson, with the key in his pocket, went out of the house to join his friends, who were gathering round Sykes' lodge.

Sykes made the happy discovery that there was no one on the telephone, and that his ancient key had been pulled. Then he hammered on the locked door of the study and roared to be released.

"Sykes is safe enough," remarked Dawson, as he joined the gathering crowd near the gates.

"And have you the Irish sweep?" chuckled Dainty.

"Ho, ho, ho!"

A gentleman with a complexion like the soe of spiders, pushing a sooty little handcart, came in rather unsteadily at the gates. Bill Murphy touched a sooty hat to the Grimalade fellows. Owing to his lameness for strong drink Mr. Murphy leaned trade bad, and he had been very glad to get an order to sweep Sykes' chimney.

When Mr. Murphy was engaged to sweep a chimney, he was liable to arrive

in a hilarious state, with direful results to carpets and curtains, for which reason he had few engagements. He was a jolly gentleman—very jolly indeed—and he gave the juniors a shrewd, sooty grin as he stopped his handcart at Sykes' porch.

Jim Dainty threw open the door of the lodge. He had paid Mr. Murphy in advance for sweeping that chimney, and Mr. Murphy's unsteady step seemed to him that he had called at the Jolly Carters on his way to Grimalade.

"Here you are, Mr. Murphy! That's the chimney!" said Jim cheerily.

"Make a good job of it."

"Begorra, sorr, I'll try to make a good job of it, sorr!" answered the Irish sweep, dropping a collection of sooty brushes on Mr. Sykes' carpet, doubtless by way of beginning the good job.

Mr. Murphy started.

The juniors backed away from the door and window, their faces set in clouds as soon as Mr. Murphy got going. But plenty stayed in. Scott clothed the interior of Sykes' lodge like a parment. The atmosphere was thick with soot. Mr. Murphy was supposed to collect the soot in a bag when he was at work. But Mr. Murphy was careless of such trifles as that. So long as he got the most down the chimney he seemed to be satisfied. And he did get it down; there was no doubt about that!

"My giddy gobshins!" gasped Ginger Hewlston. "Sykes will be fed up with Irish Sweeps after this!"

"Ho, ho, ho!"

"Main gobshins! Here he goes!" chuckled Fritz Spittin.

Sykes had recovered and changed and raved at the door of Mr. White's study for quite a long time. Finally he had occupied by the study window. Now



Sykes spluttered and spluttered. Mr. Murphy, with his big feet clomped, staggered round him, fowling himself first he got up and roared out. "The old man did not get up. Almost suffocated by soot, the bag was purged." "Crrrrrrrrrrrr!" roared Sykes. "Ho, ho, ho!" roared the Grimalade juniors.

he was coming back to his lodge in great wrath. He stared wildly at the clouds of mist rolling from door and window.

"Gee!" gasped Sykes. "Wor't all this?"

"The Irish sweep!" shrieked Jim Harty.

"Wat?" yelled Sykes.

"The Irish sweep. You've been on Irish Sweep, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked the juniors. Sykes rushed into his lodge. Bill Murphy was kneeling at the grate, industriously at work. He was a jolly gentleman in a jolly state, but he was doing his work thoroughly. There was no doubt that he was shifting a lot of soot.

"Show you!" roared Sykes. "What are you up to, boy! Come out of that!"

He grasped the Irish sweep by the back of the neck and tore him away from his labors.

"Pheat!" roared Mr. Murphy.

Sykes was dragging him along by the collar, and no Irishman was likely to stand that. William Murphy was a good-tempered man, but he was not to be handled like this. He tore himself loose, scrambled up, and fairly landed himself at Sykes.

"Houtside!" shrieked Sykes. "Oh, corked Oh, corked Oh! Oh! Help!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a yell from outside. "Go to it, Bill!"

He was going in.

He doubled Sykes in a rocky ditch, and they roared at and fro. They came staggering through the doorway together in a desperate embrace. Sykes was getting Mr. Murphy out—but he had to go with him—and they rolled over together.

There was seat to the right of the seat to the left of them, spot all over that. They rolled and wallowed in seat, amid shrieks of laughter from the juniors.

"Owl! Help!" howled Sykes. "Help! Whoop! Goo-wah! Oh, corked! Goo-wah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Finching into a man when he's swapping paper chimney!" roared Mr. Murphy. "Take that—"

"Whooop!"

"And that—and that—ye talk of the werrald! And that, ye werrald! And that, and that, ye spalpeen!"

"Goo-werrerragh!"

Sykes sprang and splattered. Mr. Murphy, with his big fists clenched, danced round him, loudly inviting him to get up and come on! Clouds of soot floated from Mr. Murphy, so he danced and panted. But Sykes did not get up. He couldn't! He'd been suffocated by soot, he had said gurgled.

"And now now I will swap you chimney!" roared Mr. Murphy. "It leaves it clean, ye spalpeen! Swap it yourself, and had care to it!"

"Goo-werrerragh!" roared Sykes.

Victorious, and still indignant, Mr. Murphy pushed his hands into his trousers, and trampled away. Sykes sat on in a sea of soot, and gurgled hoarsely.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the mob of Grimsdale fellows.

"Still been on Irish Sweep, Sykes!"

shouted Jim Harty.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goo-wah!" answered Sykes. "My eye! Goo-wah! You corked! Goo-wah! Goo-wah! You young raskin—wooooh! Ooo-wah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Sykes rocked himself, and moaned, and the juniors, still yelling, left Sykes in it. There was no doubt that Sykes had had enough of the Irish sweep!

Dainty and Dawson were answering in Middlesex Lane, when the fat Irishman passed on them. They had noticed Fritz in the distance, in talk with a stranger—a rather sly-looking, shifty-eyed fellow in a dingy overcoat and a dingy bowler hat. Fritz left that stranger as he saw the stigma of the Fourth coming along, and rushed up to them, evidently greatly excited.

"Ten pop—ten pop—blown, main good friends, lend me ten pop!" he gasped.

"That is to mean out with us 'blowing' ticket to Sykes, and he has more tickets for to next week. Lend me ten pop."

"You fat, fooling, irascible freak!" said Dainty, in measured tones. "You'll get a whopping from Hancany if you mistake us respectable."

"That is nothing! What is you chaffing, if I've fifty thousand pounds! I shall go back to Germany, and pay to the county, but you come along to the family of Van Spitta. Main good Talinty—"

"If it were a cart, it would be worth ten loth, to send you back to Germany," grumbled Dawson. "But—"

"Lend me ten pop!" urged Fritz. "I think but perhaps I shall be lucky! Took of winning fifty thousand pounds, like set old shampkopf Sykes! Vat?"

"Foolish!"

The shifty-eyed man came across to the juniors. He touched his dingy bowler, and displayed a sheet of tickets that he drew rather scepticistically from a pocket of his dingy overcoat.

"If you young gentlemen would like—"

"Chuck it!" snapped Jim Dainty.

"Come on, Dawson."

The juniors walked on, leaving the shifty gentleman with his sheet of tickets in his grubby hand. They were wrongly inclined to tip him into the ditch Fritz gave a yell.

"Talinty, Talinty, will you not lend me ten pop?"

"Ha!"

"Ack harrerd! Ten I must spend main own money!" said Fritz, mournfully.

And Fritz Spitta scoted out small silver from his trouser pocket. Dainty

and Dawson stopped again, staring at him.

"Why, you blessed Boche!" gasped Dawson.

Evidently Fritz had the money to pay for the ticket himself. It was his German money that made him cheer to buy it with Dainty or Dawson's money.

The shifty-eyed man rapidly detached a ticket, in exchange for a half-crown, two florins, a shilling, four pence, and six pence. Jim Dainty frowned.

"Chuck it, Fritz! Don't be such a silly one!" he exclaimed.

"I think but perhaps I shall be lucky!" repeated Fritz, reassured posture.

Evidently Sykes' wonderful luck had inspired Fritz. Fritz, with wild looks, in fact, had been borrowing small silver right and left in the Fourth, and saving up that ten "pop," in the hope of coming across the mob with the sweep tickets. Now he had come across ten, and nothing would have restrained Fritz from that speculation.

Jim Dainty knotted his brows as the ticket disappeared into Fritz' pocket. "Goodness! with a ticket strictly value at Grimsdale; and it was rotten form anyhow. And the idea of that shifty, sly-eyed rascal hanging about the school, trying to sell respectable tickets to schoolboys, roared Jim's ire.

"We ship in bags, Dawson," he said.

"Kick Fritz first."

"Ack harrerd!" roared Fritz, as the juniors worked him simultaneously.

"Main gentlemen! Ye you kick me on main trousers, pape and prate! Whoop!"

Fritz Fritz fled.

Then Dainty and Dawson turned their attention to the shifty-eyed stranger, big backed away from them warily.

"Look here—"

"You're not going to do any more business with Grimsdale, are you?" said Jim Dainty. "You're going to give this school a wide berth."

"I'll please myself about that!" retorted the shifty-eyed man. "And if you lay a finger on me, I'll—Oh! Good! Whooop-hooop!"

Plenty of fingers were laid on the shifty-eyed man. Dainty and Dawson collared him, and whirled him towards the ditch at the side of the road.

He struggled frantically. But the two sturdy giants and the shifty-eyed man, and there was a terrible splash. Water came had filled the ditch almost to overflowing. There was plenty of water, and plenty of mud. The ticket-merchant disappeared from view for a moment, his dingy bowler hat floating away to the swirling water.

He came up in another moment, streaming with water, and rocking with mud.

"Ooo-coo-coo!" was his first remark.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gurrerragh!"

The man scrambled wildly out of the ditch. He splashed water and mud as he scrambled. Dry mud clothed him like a garment. His shifty eyes glittered with rage through the mud.

"My giddy gotschen!" yelled Ginger Halloway, coming along with Bacon and Tom. "What's this game?"

"Sweepstake mischief," said Jim Dainty. "We're giving him a tip to keep clear of Grimsdale."

"Good! We'll give him another! Diable him!" shrieked Ginger.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The muddy gentleman had seemed disposed to haul himself at Dainty and Dawson. Now he changed his mind, and started up the lane at a run. After him went the five Grimsdaleans, doubling him. Ginger got in the first kick, and Jim got a heavy blow over the nose. Frankish lay from the shifty man. Scurvy Bacon got in the next, and then Sandy Dean landed one. Dainty and Dawson promptly took their turn.

The hapless dealer in sweep tickets ran like the wind. But the shouting juniors kept pace, and they doubled him

## The EMPTY HOUSE MURDER

Night—and under the black, ominous cloak of fog, terror had crept into that deserted house on the outskirts of London, for in one of its bare, desolate rooms, Dr. Wainwright found the crumpled figure of a man—stabbed to death! And there began one of the most baffling and sinister crime cases it had ever been Sexton Blake's task to solve; each startling new twist and turn of this sensational novel of thrills and mystery will hold you gripped till the last dramatic climax!

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"TAN pop!" gasped Fritz Spitta.

"What?" ejaculated Jim Dainty and Dick Dawson together.

"Ten pop—lend me ten pop!"

like a football along the lane to Middlemore. Not until Middlemore came in sight did the laughing juniors stop. But the hapless sweep operator did not stop. He leaped up and ran for his life. He vanished over the horizon; and there was no doubt that he would never be seen again.

**Phantom Fortune.**

**D**AINTY and Dawson took their leave of Ginger & Co. in the guise of Grimsdale and proceeded to No. 42 Study in White's House. Fritz Spinks was there, and he had his sweep ticket in his pocket, blinking at it with a dreamy look in his narrow-eyes, as he sat in the arm-chair.

"Thirty thousand pounds!" he was murmuring, as the ladies came in. "Miss goodness! If I win thirty thousand pounds I will have time at my disposal every day, and six times! Oh well! Forty pig stinners! And when I am in nice sniffs in Chesham, I will not wish to be worrying! Nether! Ach himself! You a happy life!"

And at the thought of four or five dinners a day, and never washing in the morning, Fritz sighed contentedly. Lost in that happy dream, he did not see the ladies come in, and was not aware of their presence till Jim Dainty took hold of the high back of the chair, and tipped him out in a heap. Then he became suddenly aware of it.

"Ach! Foss and prutz!" roared Fritz, as he awoke. "Fearly possidure, now I will give you nothing when I win thirty thousand pounds! You will pay me to give you something, and I will give you nothing!"

"Wise a lass that will be!" grinned Jim Dainty.

It did not seem probable to Jim Dainty that Fritz would ever bag thirty thousand pounds. Indeed, there was considerable doubt, by this time, whether that large sum would ever be handed to Fritz Spinks.

Days had passed since Mr. Spinks had discovered himself to be the happy possessor of a winning number, yet nothing, so far, had come of it. The holder of a *Sweepstakes* ticket might have expected to be flooded with offers to buy the ticket, or a share in it; but not a single, solitary offer had reached Mr. Spinks.

Grimsdale fellows were beginning to wonder whether there was anything "fishy" about that ticket! Mr. Spinks himself was puzzled.

That evening, Mr. Spinks walked over to Big School, and walked into Dr. Sparshott's study without knocking first. Dr. Samuel Sparshott fixed a rather stern eye on him.

Mr. Spinks stood in an independent

attitude in front of the Head's table, his hat still on his head. With thirty thousand pounds as good as in the bank, Mr. Spinks was a wonderfully independent gentleman.

"Well, what do you want, Spinks?" asked Dr. Sparshott, very quietly.

"I've come 'ere," said Spinks, "to speak to you as man to man, Sam Sparshott. I got Ticket Number 2042218—that's Buzzer. I'm thinking of selling 'arf that ticket, like most folks do, 'cos a bird is 'ard to worth two in the bush. Make it ten thousand pounds, and 'arf of it's yours."

And Spinks, with a flourish, laid Ticket No. 2042218 on the Head's table. Dr. Sparshott glanced at it.

"I ain't had any offers yet," said Spinks, "and that's a thing I don't really understand, a man generally getting a lot of 'em. But I'll get 'em fast enough, if you don't want to come in on it. I'm making you this offer as man to man, Sam Sparshott."

"My good man!" said the Head. "Not so much of your good man, Sam Sparshott!" interrupted Spinks. "I could buy you up, and chance it, with thirty thousand pounds as good as in the bank."

"I am afraid," said the Head, in the same gentle tone, "that the same you mention, Spinks, is not quite so good as in the bank. You have acted very foolishly, Spinks."

"Ay, draw it mild, Sam Sparshott!" said Spinks.

"But I have been very patient with you, knowing what a disappointment was in store for you, and hoping that it would be a lesson to you."

"What are you getting at, Sam Sparshott?" demanded Spinks, uneasily. "Ain't that a winning ticket in the Irish Sweep—No. 2042218, Buzzer?"

"That," said the Head, tapping it with his forefinger, "is not a ticket in the Irish Sweepstakes at all, Spinks!"

"Was-a-a-it?" gurgled Spinks.

"I have read down the list of winning tickets, and No. 2042218 has been drawn by a man named O'Rourke, in Tipperary."

"Garrigue!" roared Spinks. "Look at it, Sam Sparshott! Can't you read, and see a schoolmaster?"

"You have been deceived by a swindler," said the Head. "There are numerous numbers of forged tickets sold by swaying rascals, and you have been the victim of one of these, when I have been operating in the district. That ticket is a dud, Spinks."

Spinks staggered. He gazed at the headmaster of Grimsdale's, his eyes almost starting from their sockets.

"A—a—a dud—dud—dud!" he gurgled faintly.

"Precisely! That ticket is of no value

whatever! It has nothing whatever to do with the Irish Sweepstakes. It is a forgery, like thousands of other tickets that are sold in this country."

"Oh, coo-ks!" gurgled Spinks. "If you had read the winning list a little more carefully, you would have seen."

Miss Spinks gazed at the Head. Spinks had surely the dreadful truth presented his rather glaring face. He was not the happy holder of a *Sweepstakes* ticket. The Buzzer ticket had been drawn by somebody else!

He was the holder of a worthless slip of paper that had been printed by a swindler!

"Oh, coo-ks!" gurgled Spinks. "If—if I was meet that villain who sold me this here ticket—ah, coo-ks!"

"And now—" said the Head.

Slowly, Spinks' hand went up to his hat. He took it off. The Head smiled faintly. Miss Spinks was coming to his senses again! He would never win thirty thousand pounds! He was still a parrot at Grimsdale—and lucky if he kept the job, after the way he had carried on!

"I can't stand Spinks' phantasm fortune," said the Head, who had stepped from the study. He put his hand to his forehead in the next moment—without the hat on it.

"Begging your pardon, sir—"

Evidently the Head of Grimsdale was no longer "Sam Sparshott" to his opposite party.

"Well," barked Parsony.

"Begging your pardon, sir, y'grace needn't overlook me! I've been a-doing well a-swinging air!" gurgled Spinks. "You wouldn't turn a man out, now, after all these years, ah—yes, yes, sir!"

"Spinks," said Sammy Sparshott, "you are an old deacon! Go back to your lodge, and behave yourself, and forget all about it!"

And Spinks went.

Grimsdale rocked with mirth when it was known Spinks' phantasm fortune proved to be the Grimsdale fellows' best joke of the term. They roared over it. Only one fellow did not share the general merriment. That was Fritz Spinks.

Fritz had paid two shillings to the same enterprising dealer in dud tickets—and his ticket in the next sweep, of course, was a dud! It was an awful blow to Fritz.

The happy vision of four or five dinners a day, and no washing in the morning, was gone from his gaze like a beautiful dream! Fatty Fritz and Eliza Spinks had faces as long as fiddlers; while the rest of Grimsdale chorused.

(Another rattling story of the Grimsdale Circus next week. Popular Frank Richards also writes a long magazine article every Saturday in "The Magnet," price 2d.)



**TACTLESS.**  
Editor (to author): "Your article is not bad, but you must write so that any fool may understand you."  
Author: "What part is not clear to you, then?"  
(A Pocket Wallet has been awarded to E. Tolson, 44, Windermere Avenue, Wembley.)

**SEE SHOW!**  
Misses: "Has any one except me that sees as I hold you, Alice?"  
Servant: "Well—er—not quite, ma'am. I've swept out the dust, but the mess is still there."  
(A Penknife has been awarded to W. Lancaster, 9, Moore Avenue, Welling.)

**A DISAPPOINTMENT.**  
Fortune-teller: "There is a great disappointment coming to someone near you."  
Client: "Er—yes, you're right. I've left my money at home and I can't pay you."  
(A Penknife has been awarded to M. Woodcock, 2, Dorset Place Cottage, Harefield, Bucks.)

**SURPRISING!**  
  
Shopper (to man behind counter): "Do you have to crush every long bone?"  
Shop Assistant: "Oh, no, sir, just the usual length—sixty centimeter only!"  
(A Grand Prize has been awarded to J. Crompt, 10817-12th Street, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.)

**A TIMELY HINT.**  
Hooker (to another): "Hi, gas'not, do you support only closing?"  
Customer: "Certainly I do, my friend."  
Hooker: "Then shut up!"  
(A Pocket Wallet has been awarded to K. Pease, 18, Howard Avenue, Leeds.)

**THE EXPLANATION.**  
Father: "How is it if this new one is so cheap already?"  
Son: "I've sure I don't know, father. It was all right this morning when I saw cutting a brick with it!"  
(A Pocket Wallet has been awarded to G. Wood, 22, Alchemore Road, Leicester.)

**VERY TRUE.**  
Teacher (after reading from a History book): "Now, boys, which ruler always inspires the most respect and fear?"  
Pupil: "Mean, sir, the one on your desk."  
(A Pocket Wallet has been awarded to D. Tho, 22, Whitcomb Road, Huddon.)  
Send your jokes to "Ranger Dan," The BANNER, 8, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4 (Comp.). The sender of every joke published will receive a handsome prize.